

REMARKS:

Claims 1-4 were rejected in the last office action, in which patents to Liljenquist (4,940,346), Krueger (5,999,950), and Wood (5,511,980) were cited as references. The claims have been amended as claims 5-8 herein. The claims have been amended in such a way as to describe the present invention more particularly.

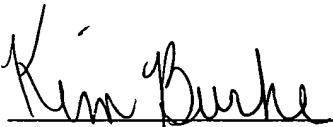
Specifically, new independent claim 5 has been written to emphasize that the graphic symbols are used to represent thoughts and feelings of the user in a shorthand manner, the improved keyboard functioning to allow for facilitated and expedited communication among computer users in global computer network chat rooms, local area network forums, and inter-office messages. Such is distinguished from the Liljenquist reference, which focuses on keys of distinctive shape and color for easy visual identification, the Krueger reference, which focuses on Japanese text input methods, and the Wood reference, which focuses on an alphabetical open book learning method for children.

In addition, new independent claim 8 relates to an *auxiliary* keyboard removably affixed to a traditional keyboard and retrofitted thereto. The usage of such an auxiliary keyboard is not taught by the references to Liljenquist, Krueger or Wood. Furthermore, this independent claim relating to the auxiliary keyboard has been re-written to specify that the graphic symbols are selected from the group consisting of facial expressions, men, women, boys, girls, and infants engaged in multiple previously determined activities, animals, fictional characters, food and drink items, trees and flowers, tools and equipment, vehicles, toys, sporting goods items, clothing items, furniture items,

items relating to nature, space, and the environment, used to represent thoughts and feelings of the user, the improved keyboard functioning to allow for facilitated communication among computer users in global computer network chat rooms, local area network forums, and inter-office messages.

Based on the foregoing, allowance of the present application is respectfully requested. Should the Examiner consider necessary any additional formal changes anywhere in the application, then it is respectfully asked that such changes be made by Examiner's Amendment. Alternatively, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned in such an instance.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,


Kim Burke

DATED: 4/6/04